QUOTES FROM PARTICIPANTS

During Module III trainees were introduced to the **ERASMUS + Programme** ad particularly to the actions aimed at supporting youth in terms of cultural growth, job opportunities and cultural and educational improvements.

Then, they were invited to define the challenges that they met or supposed to meet when applying to a Call for proposals.

A Montenegrin trainee replied as follows:

- *Complexity: The application process is detailed and requires a lot of paperwork.*
- *Competition: Many people apply, so your project needs to be top-notch.*
- *Management: Once funded, you must manage the project carefully, follow the budget, and meet deadlines.*

An Albanian trainee expressed the following :

1. *Technical & Legal Complexity: The high requirement for alignment with the EU Financial Regulation and the technicality of the application forms (LogFrame, budget breakdown).*
2. *The Partnership Gap: Difficulty in finding reliable international partners (transnational cooperation), which is mandatory for most EU grants.*
3. *Capacity for Monitoring: Lack of expertise in defining measurable KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) to prove the project's impact on the Rule of Law.*
4. *Information Gap: Difficulty for young professionals to access real-time information on open calls like IPA III or CERV.*

Another Albanian trainee considered that one of the biggest challenges is *"lack experience in writing project proposals and navigating complex application procedures".*

PROJECT PROPOSALS/IDEAS drafted by trainees

*"**Increasing youth participation in the social life** of the town of Rožaje and encouraging cooperation among young people from different backgrounds and interests. Many young people in the community do not have enough space or opportunities to express their ideas and actively participate in decisions that affect their daily lives. Through organizing workshops, public discussions, and joint volunteer activities, the project would bring young people together and encourage them to propose solutions to local problems. Special focus would be placed on including youth from different social groups in order to promote inclusion and mutual understanding. At the end of the project, young people would present their initiatives to the local community and institutions".*

***Creating a youth network in Albania** where young people from different communities work together on local social initiatives. Youth volunteers will organize workshops, cultural exchange events, and community clean-up activities to promote cooperation and inclusion. The project will especially encourage participation from rural areas and marginalized groups. Through teamwork and shared*

activities, young people will build stronger connections and develop leadership skills. The goal is to strengthen community engagement and create a more inclusive environment for youth in Albania".

"**Multicultural Youth Forum** (Focus on Collaboration and Dialogue): launching the "Tuzi Youth Forum," which would break language barriers through monthly debates on relevant local topics. The workshops would be bilingual, focusing on teamwork and solving common problems faced by youth in our community. By doing this, we would directly promote inclusion and demonstrate that cooperation leads to a stronger and more connected local community. This initiative aims to empower young voices and ensure their active participation in social processes".

"**Youth skills exchange**". This project would be a safe place where young people teach short workshops to their peers (for example photography, public speaking, social media skills, music, or basic budgeting). Participants would both learn and teach, which encourages cooperation, confidence, and inclusion of youth from different backgrounds. The event would create a supportive space where everyone can contribute their abilities. In the end, the project would strengthen connections between young people and increase their active role in the local community of Podgorica".

"**Cultural appreciation day**". Young people from Montenegro, Albania, Greece and Portugal often know little things about each others everyday lives beyond the stereotypes. During this activity, participants will meet up and work in mixed teams to blend elements from their countries and design small community activities that encourage interaction and understanding. Through storytelling, intercultural games and street art participants will create a safe place for young people and break the stereotypes.

"**Supporting the mental health of young people**" Through workshops and open conversations, participants will learn how to recognize stress and deal with everyday challenges. The activities will create a safe and friendly space where young people can share experiences and support each other. Local youth workers and professionals will help guide discussions and provide useful advice. The project aims to reduce stigma around mental health and encourage young people to take care of their well-being".

"**Accessibility to Health information and practices for European youth**". A growing, relatively uncovered struggle among teens and young adults is the approach to health practices, during a time where social media platforms contribute to spreading misinformation around themes such as nutrition and fitness, and encourages the pursuit of aesthetics at the expense of health. By offering free training courses and nutrition classes, European youth could be supported by professionals, and would have access to spaces where to socialize and build stronger community ties. Community events such as tournaments and open air group sports would be a great opportunity to reach such goal. Free online courses on proper nutrition could also offer an opportunity to expand young people's knowledge on health practices and to dispel false myths".

"**Youth Project Idea-Youth Podcast**". The project connects high school students and university students through a youth podcast. Many high school students feel uncertain about what steps to take for their future and often lack guidance from peers who recently went through similar decisions. The project would organize podcast workshops where young people learn basic media and communication skills and record conversations about education choices, career paths, and personal experiences. University students would share their journeys, challenges, and advice to help younger students feel more confident about their future. This initiative would encourage peer learning, motivation, and stronger connections between young people in the community".

"Community Youth Garden". This project would bring young people together to create and maintain a small community garden in a public space. Youth from different backgrounds would work in teams to plant vegetables, flowers, and trees while learning about teamwork and environmental care. The garden would become a welcoming place where everyone can meet, share ideas, and spend time together. Workshops and small community events like this could also be organized there to involve more local residents. The goal is to promote inclusion, cooperation, and a stronger connection between young people and their community.

"Youth Connect for Community". This project brings young people together to organize monthly community activities such as park clean-ups, sports events, and creative workshops. The goal is to encourage cooperation between youth from different backgrounds and promote inclusion in the local community. Participants will work in small teams to plan and lead activities, helping them develop teamwork and leadership skills. The project will also create a safe space where young people can share ideas and support each other. In this way, youth become more active and responsible members of their community".

"Youth Cooperation for Community Development in Albania". This project aims to create a youth network in Albania where young people from different communities work together on local social initiatives. Youth volunteers will organize workshops, cultural exchange events, and community clean-up activities to promote cooperation and inclusion. The project will especially encourage participation from rural areas and marginalized groups. Through teamwork and shared activities, young people will build stronger connections and develop leadership skills. The goal is to strengthen community engagement and create a more inclusive environment for youth in Albania.

"Youth Connect Space". This project would organize monthly meetings for young people in the local community with activities such as open discussions, art, sports, and mental health workshops. The goal is to create a safe space where young people can share experiences and reduce social isolation. The project would involve volunteers, schools, and local youth organizations. It would also include social media campaigns to promote well-being and mutual support among young people.

Inclusion in My Local Community. *The project aims to start a small volunteer group of young people to help elderly people with shopping or small tasks.This activity will bring different people in the community together. The goal is to make everyone feel supported and included.*

"Increasing active participation in community life". The project would organize regular youth meetings and workshops where young people from different towns can discuss local problems and work together on small initiatives. One focus could be improving public spaces such as parks or schoolyards through volunteer actions, which would encourage responsibility and reduce vandalism. The project should ensure inclusion of youth from rural areas and different social backgrounds by providing travel support and accessible participation. Through collaboration and idea-sharing, young people could build connections, develop important skills, and become more active members of their communities.

"Youth Sharing Club". Many young people have useful skills but rarely have the possibility to share them to others. For this reason it is harder for youth to connect and to learn from each other. I would like to create a "Youth Sharing Club" where participants teach about various themes such as photography, digital skills, art and so on. The meetings would be informal and open to everyone. The goal is to encourage cooperation and peer learning among young people.

Shkodra Youth Governance & Legal Hub. *The primary driver of youth emigration (Brain Drain) in Shkodra is the lack of Legal Certainty. While Albania aligns its legislation with the EU Acquis, there is a significant gap in de facto enforcement at the local level. The project aims to restore trust in local institutions by creating a culture of meritocracy and institutional accountability. This project empowers youth to move beyond passive observation. They will function as "Transparency Monitors," actively tracking the Municipality's progress in Cluster 1: The Fundamentals (Chapters 23 & 24). By involving law students and young professionals, we ensure that the Rule of Law becomes a lived reality for the citizens of Shkodra. The Hub will host: The Youth Legal Clinic: Providing pro-bono counseling on labor rights, startup regulations, and intellectual property to protect young entrepreneurs from exploitation. Diaspora Mentorship: Connecting Shkodra's youth with the Albanian-EU diaspora to transfer high-level "Know-How," professional ethics, and European administrative standards. Adoption of a Local Youth Action Plan by the City Council, mandating: Mandatory Transparency: Open-data access to municipal hiring and procurement processes. Participatory Budgeting: A legal mechanism allowing youth to have a decisive vote on local investment priorities. The ultimate goal is to transform Shkodra into a national benchmark for excellence. By implementing these standards today, we prepare our youth for the EU Single Market and ensure that meritocracy is the only currency for success. The "Shkodra (Albania) Youth Governance & Legal Hub" is not just about helping a few individuals; it is about building a system where the Rule of Law is the only authority.*

"CyberSmart Youth– Building Digital Safety Skills". *The project aims at increasing cybersecurity awareness and digital safety skills among young people aged 16–30. In an increasingly digital society, many young people actively use online platforms but lack sufficient knowledge about online risks such as data privacy violations, cyberbullying, misinformation, and online fraud. The project will organize a series of workshops, virtual exchanges, and practical training sessions where participants learn about safe online behavior, personal data protection, and critical evaluation of online information. Young people from different countries will collaborate in international teams to develop awareness campaigns promoting responsible digital practices. Participants will also create educational materials such as short videos, social media content, and guides that can be shared within their communities and schools. The project aims to strengthen digital resilience, promote responsible online participation, and empower young people to navigate the digital world safely and confidently."*

"European Virtual Exchange". *Nowadays young people can connect with anyone thanks to digital technologies, however, apart from the gaming context, these opportunities are still underused for meaningful intercultural dialogue. The aim of this project is to connect young people from different European countries and encourage discussions on social, economic and European Union related topics.*
The target group is young people aged 16-28 with a basic knowledge of English, which will be the working language of the activities. Participants will take part in small virtual exchange groups composed of four young people from four different countries. During weekly one-hour online sessions, participants will discuss topics such as environmental challenges, digital literacy, cultural differencies and experiences from their own countries. The project aims to improve communication skills, strenghten English language practice and promote mutual understanding while increasing awareness of key values and priorities of the European Union".